

## Here come the bogmen

by Susannah Prince

Pete Marsh is a 5' 6" inch redhead who died a very painful death. His body was found in a peat bog in Cheshire, England. He has been dead for 2,800 years.

Pete is a *Bog Man*.

Due to the Humic acid in the peat and an oxygen free environment, he has been almost perfectly preserved for centuries.

Pete Marsh, as christened by the English scientific community, is a perfect example of Iron Age man. He lived in Homer's time, in the pre-historic world before the rise of the Roman Empire, and even before the infamous conquests of Alexander the Great.

It appears Pete Marsh was strangled to death. Animal sinew was wrapped around his neck. His face is twisted into a tortured grimace. He may have been murdered, but more likely he was used as a sacrificial victim to the matriarchal fertility goddess.

Marsh, although the best preserved European to date, is not the only specimen. The Danish bogmen were actually the first to make headlines. Aarhus University Professor Peter Glob became interested in the history of the bogmen, and his book, *The Bog People*, was the result.

Glob's book proposes some interesting theories as to who the bogmen were, how they lived and how they died. His main reference is the works of the ancient roman historian Tacitus. Tacitus often mentioned the germanic tribes around the first century AD and much of what he describes can be related to the bogmen finds.

Glob believes some of the Danish bogmen were used as ritual sacrifices to appease the Mother earth goddess Nerthus. He uses archeological and scientific evidence to back up his theories. These, together with Tacitus' historical records, offer a very comprehensive picture of Iron Age man.

Glob found a number of similarities in the nature of the bogmen's mortality. Dental examinations revealed they were all roughly the same age — in their late thirties.

Each had eaten a gruel con-

sisting of seeds and grains immediately before their death. An autopsy of the bogmen showed that all inner organs like the heart, lungs and liver were perfectly preserved, as was the alimentary canal which housed the gruel.

The gruel was consistently composed of late winter/early spring foodstuffs — an indication that the bogmen had all perished in the spring, and had perhaps been given a symbolic last supper, as there was no meat.

Most importantly, the bogmen were all hung or strangled with a piece of animal sinew which was

left wrapped around their throats. Glob also believes they were chosen from a very specific age group and class, as their well-manicured hands were definitely not peasant material. The bogmen, he concluded, were given a symbolic meal and ritually

murdered in a sacrificial rite.

Glob then turned to Tacitus, who 2,000 years before had recorded the oral traditions of the Germanic tribes. He quotes Tacitus, who noted: "...at a time laid down in the distant past, all peoples that are related by blood meet in a sacred wood. Here they celebrate their barbarous rites with a human sacrifice."

Tacitus described the religious worship of these northern tribes as centred on mother earth and fertility rites. Human sacrifice was part of the worship of goddess Nerthus, and early spring was the right time for such affairs, urging the goddess to hasten the coming of spring.

Glob believes the sacrificial bogmen were either persons of

known examples of human DNA and cellular structure. The DNA obtained cannot presently reveal clean samples of ancient genes because of damage caused by plant and soil residues. But rapid advances in genetic analysis may uncover new evidence soon.

The Florida bog site appears to be an ancient burial ground, with over forty skeletons of both sexes and a wide range of ages found to date.

Two molecular biologists, Drs. William Hauswirth and Philip Laipis of the University of Florida School of Medicine, are attempting to clone the 8,000 year old DNA. They hope to establish a permanent library which would house between 100,000 and 200,000 ancient genes.

*"...the world's oldest bogmen still have intact brains after 8000 years"*

high rank chosen for sacrifice or priests ritually married to Nerthus.

The final clue furnished by Tacitus was the fact that the symbol of Nerthus was a twisted metal neck ring, which was worn by the living to honour the goddess. Glob believes that the twisted leather sinew found wrapped around the bogmen's necks could well be replicas of this same symbol.

The first reported bog body was found in 1640 in Holstein, Germany, but the latest finds have been in the United States. In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, two anthropologists, Drs. Glen Doran and Dave Dickel, have uncovered the world's oldest bogmen, who still have intact brains after 8,000 years.

These finds represent the oldest

This library would allow comparison of ancient and modern disease. It would also enable researchers to study gene evolution and perhaps offer insight into the study of viral disease. Dr. Hauswirth hopes to determine if such a cancer-causing gene existed 8,000 years ago and, if so, what degree of change has occurred?

The discovery of bogmen around the world has been an incredible find. Few would have dreamed it was possible that a person who had lived and breathed in Homer's days could have been physically transported to modern times.

Bog people have allowed us to envision a time which has scarcely been recorded. And this ancient human phenomena may now help scientists fight modern disease.



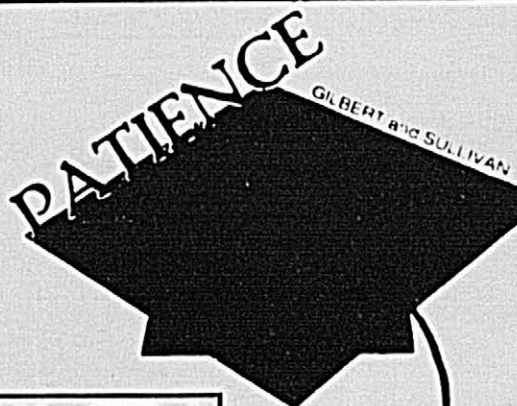
The Tollund man, who died 2000 years ago



The Grauballe man's right hand



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**STUDENTS' SOCIETY EXECUTIVE**  
PRESIDENT  
VICE-PRESIDENT, Internal Affairs  
VICE-PRESIDENT, External Affairs

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
ONE UNDERGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE  
(incl. Law, Medicine, and Dentistry)

### SENATE

ARTS (incl. Social Work)  
DENTISTRY  
EDUCATION  
ENGINEERING (incl. Architecture)  
LAW

2 representatives  
1 representative  
1 representative  
1 representative  
1 representative

MANAGEMENT  
MEDICINE (incl. Nursing and P&OT)  
MUSIC  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
SCIENCE

1 representative  
1 representative  
1 representative  
1 representative  
2 representatives

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1987, AT 16h30

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**PRESIDENT** — must be a member of the McGill Students' Society in good standing with the University except:

- i) part-time students taking less than three courses
- ii) students registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research who are non-resident students or full members of the teaching staff.

Nominations must be signed by at least 100 members of the McGill Students' Society together with their year and faculty.

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Nominations must be signed by at least 75 members of the McGill Students' Society along with their year and faculty.

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Candidates must be members of the McGill Students' Society and must be registered at McGill University as full-time students in good standing following the normal load of courses per year. Nominations must be signed by at least 75 members of the McGill Students' Society along with their year and faculty.

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Candidates must be members of the McGill Students' Society and:

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- OR
2. be students in good standing who have satisfied conditions for promotion in the previous year of studies and who are registered in a degree or diploma program, but who are permitted by Faculty to undertake a limited program.
- OR
3. be students in good standing who are registered full-time or in a limited program for a degree or diploma, and who are repeating a year for reasons other than academic failure.

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N.B. Students in Continuing Education are NOT members of the Students' Society.

OFFICIAL NOMINATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE STUDENTS' SOCIETY GENERAL OFFICE, ROOM 105, 3480 MCTAVISH STREET. ALL NOMINATION FORMS MUST HAVE THE CANDIDATE'S SIGNATURE TOGETHER WITH HER / HIS YEAR AND FACULTY, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER.

Andrew Dinsmore  
Chief Returning Officer

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WORK AS A DISTRICT RETURNING OFFICER DURING STUDENTS' SOCIETY ELECTIONS, MARCH 10-12.

If interested and eligible to work in Canada, fill in an application form at Students' Society General Office, by Feb. 27, 1987.



## Furor over fur at McGill Bloody fashion

by Kristina Stockwood

This week, the Canadian Government and the Fur Institute are sponsoring a symposium at McGill that critics charge is an attempt to discredit the anti-fur movement.

"The principle element is the use of native people to justify the fur movement and to manipulate public opinion," said participant Cynthia Drummond, Director of Montreal's branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Tonight, top executives from the fur industry will gather for cocktails at the Faculty Club with government and academic experts in Northern Studies and animal welfare officials. Seminars and debates are scheduled for Thursday and Friday.

"Many people think it's excessive and immoral to kill an animal for luxury," said Drummond, "especially in the context of today's society when so many people have so little."

"Obviously the anti-fur movement is a threat to the fur industry, but not a great one," said Del Haylock, an executive with Montreal's fur trade association. "They don't want people to have pets, have animals used in research or for fur."

"We have no financial motivation in the anti-fur movement. Pro-fur is trying to portray us as perpetrating the genocide of native peoples," said Drummond.

"We do not presume to speak for the native peoples like the fur industry does."

According to participant Dr. George Wenzel of McGill's Geography department, "There is a lot of manipulation going on for propaganda purposes on both sides, and the least heard voices are the native peoples and the native community."

"They are suffering economically, politically and socially," he said. "My concern is that native people do not have autonomy over their own lives."

According to a 1985 report issued by the Department of External Affairs, 'Defence of the Fur Trade', "killing methods are neither cruel nor inhumane."

The report states that Canada is "addressing the problems of inhumane trapping," but "the steel-jawed leghold trap is still in general use." No new developments have yet reached

"the stage of designated availability."

Gray and Co., the publicity firm involved in the report, suggests that "If a fur campaign is going to be effective, the leghold trap is a necessary sacrifice."

"Native peoples have been exploited by the fur industry for many, many years," said Drummond. "They have been victims of stores like the Hudson's Bay Company."

"The Bay developed the fur trade but it has not operated to the economic advantage of native people," said Wenzel.

"I'm an opponent of the animal rights movement but I'm not in



Opposing interests will discuss the trapping of furry animals at McGill this week.

favour of re-instating the fur trade in its old format. I don't like people wearing fur coats, but it's none of my business," Wenzel added.

Threats to the fur industry include anti-fur and anti-trapping organizations, and even animal cartoon characters, which affect school children.

The report also states that the

## hyde park

Did you know that we need 900 units of blood per day to supply the hospitals?

Did you also know that our hospitals are not getting their fair share?

It is for these reasons that the McGill Engineers are holding a Blood Drive from February 2-7, 1987. Even in the midst of recent fears of disease we believe that it is still everyone's responsibility to be sure that the gift of life is pass-

ed on. In case you require incentive we are offering a multitude of prizes including records, dinners for two, gift certificates, BEER, ski passes and many, many more.

For those not interested in the material world here are a few facts that might push you towards our Blood Drive Room (ie. the Common Room in the McConnell Building):

\* You only give One pint of blood. The other Twelve are

yours to keep.

\* You can donate every three months. If you gave at the last Blood Drive you are ready to give again.

\* You won't miss class. It takes just thirty minutes and we are open everyday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.

\* The blood you give will save someone's life and possibly your own.

\* The blood you donate goes to

help in surgery, leukemia, burns, prevention of disease in newborns and many more!

That is the whole story. So whether you are giving for the great prizes or your own pride it does not matter—Just Do It! Be sure to drop by the Common Room between February 2-7 and remember: "Blood is Life Pass it on!"

E.U.S Blood Drive Committee

## Research paved away

Until this last century, science was a pursuit of the independently wealthy. Newton had the means to hole up during the plague and write his Principia, Darwin married into the Wedgwood wealth, and science history is littered with nobility — Lord Kelvin and Count Rumford are examples.

In this century, science has moved to publicly funded establishments. Now, at least in Canada, we are seeing science supported by the ultimate beneficiaries of research and development — the consumer.

Last fall, *The McGill Daily Science Edition* urged science students to write our science minister, Frank Oberle, out of concern for the seemingly arbitrary science policy in Canada. Those who wrote received an explanation, but *The Science Daily* at least is still critical.

Oberle's plan is threefold. The Scientific Research Tax Credit (SRTC), a bungled system for supporting research and development in Canadian companies, has been replaced by a refundable tax credit which will be, in part, applicable to donations to universities or granting councils. The SRTC's were draining the science budget without the appropriate increase in industry based science. So far there have been no signs of improvement.

To some extent, industry will be able to avoid the large expenditures of setting up their own labs or hiring the expertise for a new project by donating money for the same research in a university setting. This is good news for small firms but probably bad news for science students hoping to find jobs in industry.

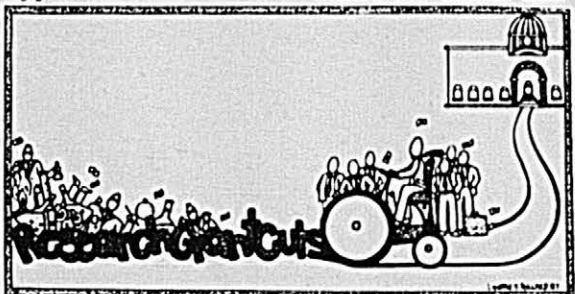
In addition, the universities will be increasingly dependent on industrial contributions. As a second effort, Oberle boasts a "guaranteed funding base" for the three granting councils. (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Medical Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council). For NSERC he has guaranteed approximately \$300 million annually. Unfortunately that is \$300 million, period — without account of inflation and is significantly less than the 1984-85 NSERC budget.

However, he also includes a matching formula, matching private sector contributions up to a maximum of 6 per cent of the previous year's budget — about \$19 million per annum. This was designed to increase R&D contacts between the university community and industry, which it will do splendidly. In order to keep up to inflation, universities will have to be prepared to expend more money in research that industry is interested in — primarily applied research and technology development rather than pure research.

Industry will be happy, for a while, but the plan is short sighted on two counts. First it assumes that industry can be wrung for money indefinitely whereas the estimated \$40 million Canadian industry has to offer will only support the increase

required to match inflation for 4-5 years. Secondly, it puts a heavy influence on the second stages of science, applied research and development. If, twenty years down the road, Canadian industry wonders why science has little new to offer, it will be because pure research, the base for future technology, is suffering now.

Nor is it suffering only in the universities. The third thrust of Oberle's program is to change the program priorities of the National Research Council laboratories to "enhance technology transfer and diffusion." This means that the NRC will be charged with supporting industry instead of developing basic research. The NRC has, in the past, made significant contributions to international science and when the first cuts to the NRC were made in 1984, letters of support came from laboratories around the world. Oberle has appointed a task force to ensure the recent cuts



don't "seriously impact on public health, safety, industry and research support." It's unfortunate that he missed the serious impact on Canada's scientific community.

*The Science Daily* agrees with the minister that if work is done in the universities "a significant advantage over the same work being done in government laboratories is that the (graduate) students... take this knowledge with them when they graduate." We disagree that the government is "seeking to shift some basic research towards universities" when it is, in effect, increasing university involvement in industry and decreasing its ability to support basic research programs.

The fundamental problem is that the time scale of government thinking can't encompass the time scale of scientific achievement and therefore they continue to cater to the economy — the short term needs of industry, the consumer — while ignoring the long term requirements for a healthy science program to bolster the economy. Science for the consumer could mean the loss of Canada's stature in the international science community and a technology falling behind that of our peers.

It is ironic to note that the money involved in the most recent NRC cuts in which entire programs were cut is comparable to the \$15 million with which Jeanne Piggot, chair of the National Capital Commission, wishes to pave the Royal Mile, from Government House to Parliament in Ottawa with red tarmac. If only the nobility were interested in science.

Carol Bowes

## Engineers want your blood

THE **mcgillDaily**

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## The oracle speaks

by Michael Finkelstein

### Playing with Needles

*Does acupuncture really work or is it all a crock? What does Western science say? Should I try it myself?* John, Arts U1

Quite probably, John, and with railroad spikes — but only because I don't like you.

Acupuncture is a method of treating a multiplicity of disorders by inserting the tips of long, thin needles into the skin at specific body points. Enshrined in the old Chinese culture, acupuncture is the basis for Chinese medicine.

Only recently has acupuncture become practiced in other parts of the world and have western scientists tried to explain the "how's" and "why's" of this treatment. But the philosophy behind it is already well-established.

The Chinese believe that there are two polar forces acting in the body. These forces are called the Yin and the Yang. They combine to form a kind of life force called Chi. This life force flows through the body along channels which are called meridians.

A body is said to be healthy when the Yin and Yang are in harmony. If the Yin and Yang fall into disharmony, disease and pain occurs.

The Chinese also believe that it is possible to harmonize Yin and Yang by inserting acupuncture needles at several of a possible 500 points, located on the human body's meridians.

Although acupuncture is claimed to be able to cure nearly 300 diseases, from asthma to ulcers, the focus of western interest has been on the use of acupuncture as an anaesthetic or pain-killer.

Western researchers have found that acupuncture does alleviate pain but they have failed to discover both how and why. What researchers find most puzzling is how, for example, a needle placed in the earlobe or ankle can make chest pain disappear.

Western science doesn't have it figured out yet. Current theories suggest the pricks of the needles stimulate the release of the body's internally-produced pain suppressing hormones, similar to morphine, called endorphines. But without further research, they may never be safe for recreational use.

### Zeno's paradox

*I heard that science could not prove that motion was possible for two thousand years. What was the problem? Did they put too much lead in the wine or what?* Albert, Education U2

Actually, Albert, the problem was the philosophers rather than the scientists. Zeno, a pre-Socratic philosopher set up a series of arguments designed to prove that motion was impossible.

He stated that in order to travel across any distance — say one hundred yards — one must first cross one half of that distance — fifty yards. Once one half of the distance has been crossed another one half of the remaining distance — another twenty five yards — must be crossed.

Since space is infinitely divisible, this sequence can be repeated over an infinite number of additions.

Zeno argued that the sum of these infinite positive distances results in an infinite distance which cannot be traversed in a finite quantity of time.

Zeno concluded that motion was impossible. For him, physical evidence, such as walking the one hundred yards, was only a perception of motion and that in reality absolute motion had not occurred. He maintained that he would only accept his paradox as being a fallacy if it could be logically disproved.

Most scientists ignored him, but it took mathematicians about 2000 years to logically refute Zeno. They proved that the sum of an infinite number of additions, such as those set up by Zeno, would not diverge to form an infinite number but would converge. This converging number was logically the original distance to be traversed.

*If you have any science questions which you would like to ask the oracle, drop a note to Mike Finkelstein in Union B-03.*

## Could your pr...

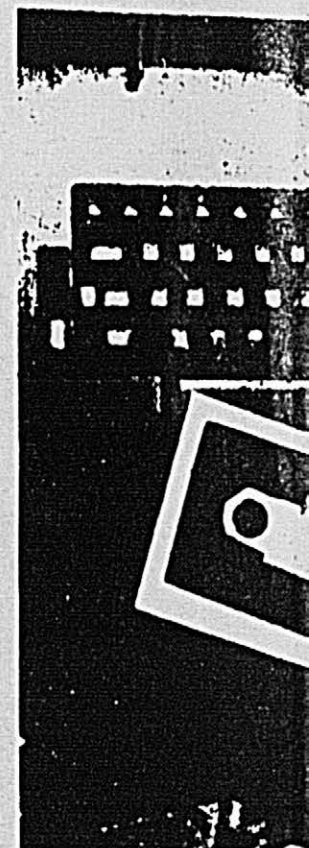
by Pierre Fleurent

Along a low profile corridor in the McConnell Engineering building, half-opened doors allow a glance into plain, austere rooms, seemingly overcrowded with equipment assembled in intricate set-ups. The computer room regulars, totally absorbed by the machines, who seemingly live in a secret adjacent room.

Walking around the various McGill research labs and centres, you might be surprised to find that a great number of experiments are linked by a broad-based consortium at McGill — the McGill Centre for Intelligent Machines (MCIM).

The MCIM deals with the many aspects of automation and so defines its multifaceted nature. Computer science along with mechanical, electrical and biomedical engineering faculties are represented. Activities emanate from seven distinct areas of research: biomedical image processing; computational perception & psychophysics; computer vision; controls & systems; sensors & signals; and robotics & applications.

Linking the research is the need to integrate the different aspects of automation and research the ranging implications of artificial intelligence. The centre's organization and structure is considerable. Under the supervision of director M. D. Levine and manager L. J. Vroomen, 12 full-time and four associate researchers, four "professional staff" people, two secretaries and 80 graduate students form the group. Collaboration with other McGill facilities, such as the VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration) design lab, help complete the available resources.



The scope and size of the unique in Canada, probably very little Canadian corporations is done in this area. Similar are encountered in U.S. such as Stanford, MIT and Mellon.

Financing comes from provincial grants as well. While government contracts in the domain, McGill retains publication rights on research contracts. Competition for a publication delay to get competition, but no secret accepted.

Grant money is relatively

## Foetal research:

by Arne Oyvind Mooers

The idea, nigh aphorism, that our technological evolution is fast outpacing our cultural, is no clearer than in the field of medicine, and has no clearer example than that of foetal cell surgery.

The technique involves the use of an aborted foetus as the source of tissues and cells for transplant and adds yet another twist to the already convoluted abortion issue.

So far, only spontaneous abortions have been used as a source of transplant material. Unfortunately, these foetuses are the ones most likely to be genetically defective, and their tissue unacceptable.

The potential benefits are immense. The use of foetal transplants has yet to reach its full potential for several reasons, the most obvious of which is that of rejection. The body has an uncanny sense of self and non-self, and will attack the transplanted organ or grafted tissue with the same unabashed

impunity reserved for pneumococcus or other strains.

Although drugs are used on our little armies, they are not effective — and what's good for the organ is good for the little pneumococcus devils too.

Another common problem is host disease. Here the host organ thinks it's at home and everything else is foreign. It produces antibodies, such as those in bone marrow, it does. Enter surgery.

Foetal cells are "immunologically naive". They have not yet seen the antigens on their cell surfaces, allow the host's system to treat them as foreign, and are not rejected. They are also too immature to be the host. Yet because of this they can regenerate, and have the potential to repair damaged and brain cells (both of which have this ability).

Foetal cell surgery is still in the early stages of practical use.





# of. be replaced?

Simulating the intelligent reasoning process in this way, then involves the design of 'Super Programs' that allow the self-generation of operational programs.

Now, automation is not in itself a new field. Ever since the industrial revolution (and even before, some will argue), it has been applied at various levels. New interest arises from the speed now attainable, and the flexibility of recognition and sensing, upon which the decision capacity lies.

In one research area, McGill's Binary Decision Machine (BDM), the search for speed is achieved through simplicity, which also increases reliability and operation ease. Instructions are stripped to a minimal set, with the CPU (Central Processing Unit) equivalent acting strictly as an allocator to make up a memory mapping unibus system.

The coming of cheaper memory was the key in making the BDM concept economically viable. Now smaller enterprises can take advantage of this development and become increasingly automated through innovations such as widespread, flexible manufacturing systems.

The limits of automation are continually being pushed by technology yielding faster electronic processing, as with gallium-oxide semiconductors. Advances in miniaturization like intrinsically controlled artificial organs and neural prostheses provide a glimpse of what the future may hold.

Vrooman, however, is very cautious about assessing these developments. He believes one must always consider that universal systems are an ideal, and that humans themselves fix the limit of their technologies.

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come by, but the equipment needed for this type of research is prohibitively expensive. In this respect, our wealthier American counter-parts have a clear advantage. Many universities, such as the University of Nance in France, are seeking mutual research as a result.

But according to graduate student Spike Douglas, "I haven't lacked anything significant so far. One must sometimes seek things out, but they are available." The general attitude is also very relaxed. "What can be interpreted as the opportunity to slack off should in fact be regarded as the availability of freedom in your research," adds Douglas.

MCIM policy also demonstrates its two main objectives: the advance of knowledge and the academic formation of its students.

The need to define 'intelligence', with regard to 'intelligent machines', arises immediately and makes experts uneasy. Originating from the concept of 'artificial intelligence', the term 'intelligence' is "a very poor choice of words," according to Vrooman.

In his gritty Texas accent he adds, "It is more of a computer assisted reasoning scheme, where the programs are given the means to solve problems, rather than specific algorithms."

## an ethical timebomb

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It has been

used as a treatment for diabetes in China since 1982. Foetal pancreas islet cells have been transplanted into patients, in the hope that they will be incorporated and produce insulin.

The results have been good. Many patients now need less insulin, and a very few have stopped injections altogether. Related kidney and eye diseases have also shown improvement.

Research in Sweden has shown a potential for foetal cells to produce dopamine in hosts. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter in short supply in those afflicted with Parkinson's disease. Since foetal cells are still developing, it is possible to activate them, "coaxing" the cells to perform a specific function. Parkinson's has been treated in laboratory rats, and trials with humans are only a couple of years away.

In America, foetal cell researchers are pursuing the use of foetal liver cell transplants. Foetal liver cells will actually migrate to and become bone marrow, our blood cell factory. This could

be a powerful technique for curing diseases of abnormal haemoglobin, which binds oxygen in the blood. Foetal liver tissue has already been used to change the blood type of unborn sheep.

Foetal liver cells were used in treating the most severely irradiated of Tchernobyl. The cells were transplanted in hopes of reconstituting the patients' blood-forming tissues. While all the patients died, this too is a use that may loom in our future.

All this, on the surface, is good news. The potential is great, and the prospects favourable. However, we must not forget from where the tissues and cells come. They come from aborted fetuses.

As the technique grows, the need for nice healthy aborted fetuses will too, and suddenly, your mistake could be your profit. In the words of ethicist Arthur Caplan of the Hastings Centre in Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. "The use of fetuses as organ and tissue donors is a ticking time bomb of bioethics."

## ...Bloody fashion

continued from page 1

Fur Institute, a co-sponsor of the McGill symposium, was established with government aid "in order to obtain an entity that represents all aspects of the fur industry."

"The Fur Institute is a spokesman for the fur industry and supposedly for aboriginal peoples but they certainly don't represent the spectrum," said Wenzel.

"The survival of the native population is the only morally acceptable excuse the fur industry can give. It's been the most expedient PR gimmick and it's a very successful one," said Drummond.

Furthermore, she said, "I think fur is going out of fashion. It's considered vulgar and nouveau riche and I don't think 16 year old women dream of owning a fur coat like they did in the sixties. It's gone the way of the shiny big cadillac."

Yet Haylock said, "Our sales are at an all-time high and getting better all the time — but one should never be complacent."

"We're simply saying that trapping animals is inhumane," said Drummond. "The government has been talking about more humane methods of trapping but they've been using the same traps for two hundred years."

Drummond charges the media of being unwilling to report on the issue for fear of losing fur advertisers: "The anti-fur people can't get their message across because no one will pick it up. It's sort of a David and Goliath situation — we have no funds or friends in high places," she said.

However, public support for the anti-fur movement has grown. A recent public opinion survey done by Angus Reid said that 49 per cent of respondents thought killing animals for their fur is morally wrong.



# Les matériaux de notre tissu social

par Gaétan Brochu

2. Les matériaux artificiels de la médecine — les biomatériaux.

Dans le premier article de cette série nous avons présenté une histoire de la « relation » matériel-humain. Nous avons montré comment le développement de la société fut et est encore lié à la nature des matériaux disponibles. Le terme matériel est utilisé ici dans son sens technique: toute matière servant à réaliser un bien quelconque. Le présent article se veut un peu plus technique que le précédent; il traitera des biomatériaux.

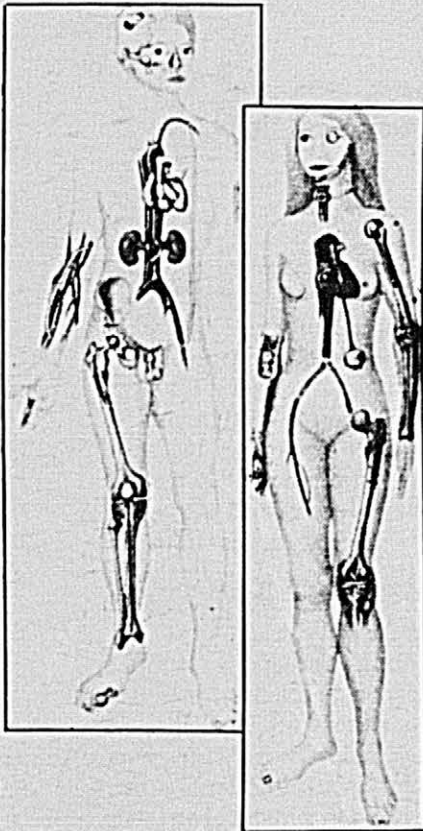
Les biomatériaux peuvent être définis comme étant toute substance bénéfique, susceptible d'être implantée dans un organisme vivant dans le but de modifier, d'améliorer ou de remplacer un organe existant. Ceci exclut les substances médicamenteuses. Ils varient énormément par leur nature et leur complexité: ils vont du simple fil utilisé pour les points de suture au cœur artificiel.

Dès l'Antiquité, les chirurgiens ont tenté de mettre en place des matériaux de substitution. Probablement avaient-ils déjà une approche mécanistique du corps humain. On concevait du fait même que des matériaux étrangers peuvent remplacer ou servir à réparer des organes humains. Les premiers essais d'implantation de corps étrangers sur et dans l'organisme humain étaient d'origine animale. Ainsi, des nerfs ou des tissus d'intestins étaient utilisés pour réaliser les points de suture.

Les animaux sont encore une source importante de matière première pour les biomatériaux. Malgré les progrès remarquables dans l'utilisation de peaux artificielles, en particulier pour les grands brûlés, le traitement le plus efficace semble rester l'utilisation de fibres de collagène bovin.

Un matériel quelconque, avant de devenir un biomatériau, se doit d'obéir à des normes techniques très strictes. Il doit non seulement subir des tests de résistance mécanique mais aussi passer des tests de biocompatibilité (toute la question de l'interface prothèse-tissus vivants). Il se doit de ne présenter aucune toxicité à son hôte. Il devra interagir de façon contrôlée et prévisible.

Actuellement, les biomatériaux les plus utilisés remplacent les valves cardiaques, permettent de réaliser des pontages coronariens et de réparer différentes parties osseuses et servent d'implant esthétique, comme les prothèses mammaires. Ceci n'inclut pas les matériaux dentaires qui ont aussi leur importance mais où les critères de biocompatibilité sont différents. Les valves sont la plupart du temps en polyuréthane, une variante structurale de la mousse isolante bien connue. Les pontages ont de fortes chances d'être réalisés avec une veine de patient ou un conduit de polyester, fibre très utilisée dans



l'industrie textile. Les réparations d'os sont généralement faites d'alliage inoxydable. Enfin, les implants sont faits à partir d'un polymère de silicone, qui est plutôt élastique. Tous ces exemples démontrent une conception un peu ancienne des implants, sans vraiment d'interaction avec l'organisme. La recherche actuelle n'a maintenant plus peur d'implanter un matériel qui va se modifier dans l'organisme. L'exemple le plus spectaculaire est

probablement le remplacement de tendons par un composite, soit un mélange de fibres de carbone et d'un polymère à base d'acide lactique. Une fois dans l'organisme, les polylactones sont métabolisés et les fibres de carbone s'intègrent dans les tissus en croissance. Un autre exemple est celui des implants cardio-vasculaires; les principales considérations dans ce domaine sont d'éviter une thrombose (formation de caillot) et hémolyse (destruction des globules rouges). Pour ce faire, l'ancienne école de pensée prônait l'utilisation d'un matériel poli et non-interactif. La recherche actuelle va plutôt dans le sens de traiter la surface pour qu'un dépôt protéinique s'effectue dans l'organisme qui rendra l'implant « invisible » au fluide biologique. Nous nous devons aussi de mentionner le développement des différents organes artificiels qui ont vraiment un rôle actif dans l'organisme tel les reins et le pancréas. Le rein artificiel, prothèse de transfert permet de remplacer une fonction rénale par des échanges au travers d'une membrane de polyacrylonitrile. Dans ce dernier cas l'implant a un rôle physiologique majeur.

La recherche sur les biomatériaux sera très certainement influencée par l'augmentation des maladies associées au vieillissement de la population. Il faudra traiter des plus en plus de

maladies de dégénérescence: les maladies cardio-vasculaires, les insuffisances respiratoires, les troubles de l'appareil locomoteur et les atteintes organiques multiples. Quelle avenue prendra cette recherche? Une recherche de luxe pour résoudre quelques cas bien particuliers et très coûteux, telle la mise au point d'un cœur artificiel? Cet avenir est très justifiable à long terme. Cependant, avec une vision plus démocratique, un désir d'une plus grande autonomie du patient et les pressions socio-économiques, il apparaît inévitable qu'une plus grande priorité sera donnée au remplacement prothétique implantable. Ainsi, l'entretien, le contrôle ne mobiliseront pas de

ressources et permettront une réhabilitation du malade avec un qualité de vie certaine.

La recherche d'un matériel utilisable à des fins médicale est toujours le résultat d'une intense collaboration interdisciplinaire: science des matériaux, génie biomédical, chirurgie et sciences fondamentales (biologie et chimie). Les progrès futurs rendront possible le traitement des désordres majeurs. Ils pourront et se devront d'aller vers la prévention de troubles médicaux chroniques. Là sera probablement la plus grande réussite de cette recherche.

Le prochain article traitera des matériaux dans les communications.



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McGill students: \$2.50 per day; for 3 consecutive days, \$2.00 per day; more than 3 days \$1.75 per day. McGill faculty and staff: \$3.50 per day. All others: \$4.00 per day. **Exact change only, please.**

The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damage due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print a classified ad.

## 341 — APTS., ROOMS, HOUSING

Room for rent, everything included. 3483 Hutchison Street, 3 minutes walking distance from McGill. 284-1227.

Immediate occupancy third person for large renovated 6½ \$190.00 Prince Arthur at Durocher 842-9430.

Roommate wanted. Own room in a 4½, \$136/month. Heating, hot water included. Near metro & 24 bus. Must be non-smoker, fairly quiet. Phone 489-6326.

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Roommate required — Available 1 Feb., female preferred. Atwater Metro, \$230/month, heat included. Call 937-1845.

Looking for a quiet non-smoker to share a 5½ until the end of June. Duluth and St-Laurent. \$150 excluding utilities. Call 392-5325 after 6 pm.

Downtown sublet. Large 1½, high ceilings, quiet, clean, near metro Guy. Furnished or unfurnished. Available mid Feb / Mar 1 - June 30, with option to renew. \$290. 935-1419.

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Gay student seeks other gay or open-minded hetero student to share 2-bedroom apartment near St-Laurent / Sherbrooke; \$270 all included. Phone 286-1962 after 6 pm.

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Looking for female to share special, sunny, beautiful, furnished four bedroom 8½ on St-Denis near Pins. \$275/month. Heat included 845-5998.

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Futon 7e Clef looking for fully bilingual salesman for new store in Point Claire, St-John & Hymus; \$6/hour, part-time, hours negotiable, 937-2253.

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## 352 — HELP WANTED

Female babysitter wanted Wednesdays and Fridays for 2 year old. References needed. Cote St-Luc area. 481-9696 evenings.

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## 385 — NOTICES

**Beta Theta Pi fraternity** is currently rushing, come to our info meetings, Monday and Wednesday in Union 310 at 4:30. Info, phone Rob 286-1671.

**Reggae Concert:** Gertrude's Pub presents "Kali & Dub Inc." for an evening of 'Jah Rasta Music' Saturday Jan. 31st, 9:30 pm. \$2.

**Rev. Chris Ferguson,** Presbyterian / United Church chaplain on campus, is available to students, staff and faculty for counselling or conversation. Drop in at 3484 Peel (Newman Centre) or call for appointment at 392-5890.

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Candidates for this position should be members of the McGill Faculty who have garnered the acquaintance and respect of both the staff and student body and who are familiar with university policies and procedures. Facility in both English and French is desirable.

Candidatures and nominations for the position should be forwarded to:

Dr. S.O. Freedman  
Vice-Principal (Academic)  
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to be received no later than February 28, 1987.

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The McGill Debating Union weekend's International Winter seeks volunteers to judge this Carnival Tournament. Call

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**RESIDENCE COUNSELLOR**

Nominations are being sought for the position of residence representative to sit on Students' Council. Term of office is effective from February 16, 1987 until June 1, 1987. Nominations are open from Monday, January 26 and will close 16h30, Tuesday, February 3, 1987.

**Election Polls: Bishop Mountain Hall**  
4-7 pm Tuesday, Feb. 10  
4-7 pm Wednesday, Feb. 11

Nomination forms may be picked up from Students' Society, Room 105, Union Building. Completed nominations must contain 20 signatures from students in residence.



Andrew Dinsmore  
Chief Returning Officer

Uruhu Na Ufamu meets at 18h00 in Union 425/426. Amani na umoja! Potluck at 19h00 4567 L'Esplanade. info 392-8941.

Management Cancer Auction Committee gives you a chance to win ski passes, dinners from 9h00-17h00 in the Bronfman Cafeteria, 1001 Sherbrooke.

McGill Outing Club meets in 232 Leacock at 19h30.

Department of English Students' Association weekly coffee hour in Arts 305 from 14h00 to 16h00 offers free coffee, donuts and conversation for English students. info. 392-4483  
Central America Group features a slide show and speakers from ARTIFACT in Union 310, but we don't know when

Students' Society Open Meeting and Information Session happens today at 12h00 in B-09/10.

Library Workshops Term Paper Research features info on compiling footnotes and bibliography for the Humanities 13h00-14h00 and the Social Sciences from 17h00-18h00 at the Undergraduate Information Desk. info 392-4288.

The Yellow Door Coffee House The Written Word Performed by Montréal Writers with Asher begins at 21h00 in 3625 Aylmer.

McGill Student Pugwash & Assoc. for Baha'i Studies lecture Myths, Models and Mysticism: Is science only what we see? by Prof. William Hatcher (U. of Laval) begins at 19h00 in room 304 of the McConnel Engineering

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